



## **MEALTIME MANAGEMENT POLICY**

### **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that mealtimes that take place at Lift Up Voices are safe and enjoyable for all participants. This pertains to scenarios in which participants may consume food on the Lift Up Voices premises or during a scheduling outing. The policy has been framed around the individuals' rights as they are specified in the Privacy Act (1988), Freedom of Information Act (1982), Disability Services Act (1993) and NDIS Practice Standards *Provider Governance and Operational Management* Core Module (Information Management).

### **2. SCOPE**

This policy applies to all Lift Up Voices Directors, staff members, volunteers and individuals who are engaged in Lift Up Voices programs and activities. It also applies when Lift Up Voices participants attend public performances, excursions or events in which food may be consumed.

### **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

While consumption of food does not fall within the typical parameters of services provided by Lift Up Voices, we recognise that some participants may have additional needs that require specific support to safely do so and that this should not exclude a participant from accessing an extraordinary event or opportunity in which a meal may be consumed. This policy outlines protocols that will be followed should such a scenario arise. We are committed to supporting safe mealtime practices and ensuring that any risks associated with mealtimes, including choking or aspiration, are effectively managed.

### **4. PROCEDURES**

- Any specific or additional needs pertaining to mealtimes will be disclosed to Lift Up Voices Directors as part of their healthcare plan at their initial consultation.
- In the event that any additional needs are identified, a plan will be formulated in liaison with a participant or their care provider prior to an extraordinary event or activity in which food will be consumed. This may include the stipulation of a support worker attending the event alongside a participant to manage specific mealtime support needs, such as feeding through a gastrointestinal tract. This plan will be documented in writing and stored in the participant's file on Splose.
- Lift Up Voices' staff will not assist participants to eat or drink, or supervise mealtimes, if the participant is identified as having swallowing or choking issues.
- Lift Up Voices will only accept participants requiring support to eat safely, to any activity involving food if:

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- the participant supplies an appropriately trained support worker from an alternative provider who has appropriate policies and procedures in place; and
- the support worker is known to the participant and briefed on the specific risks or requirements in advance.
- Any known mealtime-related risks (e.g. dysphagia, texture-modified diets, risk of aspiration) must be clearly documented in the participant's healthcare plan and reviewed annually or as circumstances change.
- Staff must escalate any mealtime-related concern (e.g. coughing, refusal to eat, signs of distress) to a Director immediately and follow incident reporting procedures if a mealtime-related incident occurs.

## 5. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed on a two yearly basis. However, if at any time the legislative, policy or funding environment is so altered that the policy is no longer appropriate in its current form, the policy will be reviewed immediately and amended accordingly.

## RELATED POLICIES

Privacy and Confidentiality Policy

Code of Conduct Policy

Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation Policy

Incident Response, Reporting and Investigation Policy

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION OR STANDARDS

Disability Services Act (1993)

NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators (2021)

Privacy Act (1988)

NDIS Amendment (Getting the NDIS Back on Track No.1) Act 2024

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